



Hon. Robert T. Matsui

Member of Congress

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Robert T. Matsui
Serving California's 5th District

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MATSUI JOINS DEMOCRATIC LEADERS TO LAUNCH SOCIAL SECURITY DISCHARGE PETITION

WASHINGTON, DC—Today Social Security Subcommittee Ranking Member Robert T. Matsui (D-CA) joined Democratic leaders to formally launch a discharge petition that will bring five different Social Security privatization bills to the House floor for debate and votes. The petition will force a debate on the three plans offered by the President's Commission on Social Security (H.R. 4022 – 4024), as well as Rep. Clay Shaw's privatization bill (H.R. 3497) and the Arney-DeMint plan (H.R. 3535). Although all of these privatization plans were unveiled last year, the House GOP leadership has refused to debate or vote on any of them. The petition will also bring H.R. 4780 to the floor, which rejects all privatization proposals. Discharge petitions are the only way for the minority party in the House to force a debate on bills that are being bottled up in Committee.

"Republicans are trying to have it all ways. They say they have plans that will create private accounts, not cut benefits, solve Social Security's long-term deficit, and entail no risk. If that's all true, why are Republicans sweeping this issue under the rug?" said Matsui. "Republicans are doing everything in their power to avoid discussing these plans until after the election. That's not how democracy works. Elections are meant to hold leaders accountable for their agendas. The Republicans' agenda for Social Security is privatization. The American people have the right to hear the facts before November."

A discharge petition is the same legislative tool Democrats successfully employed to force a vote on campaign finance reform earlier this year. 218 signatures are needed to force the bills to the floor. Members will then have a chance to vote on each privatization plan separately, or to vote to reject privatization entirely.

"It's time for Republicans to take a stand on their own privatization proposals. If they really believe these plans work and that they are good for the country, let them cast their vote," commented Matsui. "We believe privatization will cut benefits, cost trillions of dollars in general revenues, and still not solve the problem. We're willing to vote on it. Republicans should be willing to do the same. The American people deserve a debate on Social Security before the elections."

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